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CLAIMS:

1. A dispensing apparatus comprising a housing and a metering tube, said metering tube having an opening to the interior thereof and said housing having a chamber therein for storing medicament, said metering tube being extendable to a dispensing position, and retractable to a filling position;
- 10 wherein said opening is in communication with said chamber when said metering tube is in said filling position.
- 15 2. Dispensing apparatus as claimed in claim 1 further comprising a piston for drawing medicament into said metering tube and expelling medicament from said metering tube.
- 20 3. Dispensing apparatus as claimed in claim 2 wherein the length of the piston stroke is fixed.
- 25 4. Dispensing apparatus as claimed in claim 2 or 3 wherein at least one member is provided on said metering tube to limit the displacement of the piston in at least one direction.
- 30 5. Dispensing apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 2 to 4 wherein the piston is provided inside said metering tube.
6. Dispensing apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 2 to 5 wherein said piston is moveable with said metering tube.
- 35 7. Dispensing apparatus as claimed in any preceding claim wherein at least one stop is provided to limit the displacement of the metering tube.

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8. Dispensing apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims wherein the dispensing apparatus is provided in a hand-held inhaler for oral delivery of medicament.

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9. Dispensing apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims further comprising apparatus for delivering the dispensed medicament as an atomised mist.

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10. A method of operating dispensing apparatus comprising a housing and a metering tube, the housing having a chamber and medicament being provided in said chamber, wherein the method comprises the steps of:

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(a) retracting said metering tube to a filling position;

(b) drawing medicament into said metering tube from said chamber;

(c) extending said metering tube to a dispensing position; and

(d) expelling medicament from said metering tube.

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11. A method as claimed in claim 10 wherein said apparatus further comprises a piston, wherein movement of the piston in a first direction draws medicament into the metering tube in accordance with step (b), and movement of the piston in a second direction expels medicament from the metering tube in accordance with step (d).

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12. A method as claimed in claim 11 wherein the piston and the metering tube are moved together during steps (a) and (c).

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13. A method as claimed in any one of claims 10 to 12 wherein the medicament is dispensed from the metering tube to an atomising apparatus and the method further

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comprises the step(s) of atomising the medicament and delivering it as an atomised mist.

5 14. A method as claimed in claim 13 wherein the metering tube is retracted before the medicament is atomised.

10 15. A method as claimed in any one of claims 11 to 14 wherein the dispensing apparatus is provided in a hand-held inhaler for oral delivery of medicament.

16. Dispensing apparatus substantially as described herein with reference to the attached Figures.

15 17. A method of using dispensing apparatus substantially as described herein with reference to the attached Figures.